

Canaan Climate Smart Task Force
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2024
at Canaan Town Hall

Present: Craig Westcott, Tara Donahue, Marion Bolognesi, Elyse Mason, Will Powers, Dylan Cipkowski, Tom Potter, Brenda Adams, Becky Meier and Nicolas Adams (as guest and observer)

To make your to do tasks easier to find, I highlighted your name when associated with a task.

Craig
Marion
Tara
Brenda
Becky
Dylan
Will
Elyse

Last meetings

- November 21 meeting of committee
- Scoping meeting in December
- Webinar- CEC 3.0 funding, given by Tara, Slides available at https://youtu.be/Bw2W11XUs_U

We are working on two different systems, with different point systems.

- CEC- NYSERDA. We can receive money
- CSC- DEC. We get bronze, silver and gold certification
- There are interactions between these two

CEC point system

- We currently have 3700 CEC points for which we've received \$55,000
- The next threshold is 5000 points, which will make us eligible for a \$100,000 grant
 - deadline is the end of 2025 or when money runs out
 - this cycle started in December 2023
 - Probably the last cycle of this grant money
- We need 1300 more points

At this meeting we worked with Tara on how we can get CEC points. There are 65 possible actions receiving from 200- 1000 points. The following are possible projects to gain points.

- See attached document.
 - Things highlighted in Green we have already done.

- Things highlighted in Yellow are actions Tara thinks we might be able to do.
- Update benchmarking for the past two years- no points, but relatively easy and then we get a free energy audit (worth about \$2500) (Though we've already completed one.) For the initial benchmarking, Heather, Terese, Marion, Craig and Tara, spent between 5-10 hours going through utility bills to develop the initial benchmarking
 - This time around it should be quicker
 - **Craig**, **Marion** and **Tara** will work on this
- CDG subscription (community solar) for town buildings
 - Apparently there is currently no capacity for people in NYSEG territory
 - Estimate of 18 months before there will be capacity
 - Maybe town should sign up so it will be on a waiting list for when it becomes available.
 - Even if it's too late to get points, it's a worthy thing to do.
 - **Brenda** and **Will** will continue to follow this item.
 - The Town of Canaan is considering solar panels on the roof of the highway garage building for the future. The building needs a replacement roof that will have to come first.
 - The Town of Canaan has an ordinance against ground mounted commercial solar panel arrays.
 - **Becky** thinks we should look into this as it seems contrary to the Climate Smart goals.
- The town has co-applied with Cornell Cooperative Extension for grant funds for two projects in 2024.
 - Development of a webpage, social media campaign about climate change, disaster and emergency preparedness information- PE9
 - Development of a Flood Guide for Canaan residents and businesses.
 - They will find out in mid March if they get funded for these projects. (They think they will.)
 - If projects are funded, Cornell consultant services to develop these items will be covered by the grant at no charge to the Town of Canaan.
- Clean Energy upgrades
 - For our Bronze certification we reached 10% reduction in energy used for lighting- interior and exterior (excluding street lights)
 - Now there are 2 more tiers: 15% and 20% reductions (from the original use)
 - The town has put in a heat pump at the library.
 - The town is thinking of putting heat pumps in the **highway** garage.
 - These should reduce our energy use and may bring us to 15 or 20% reductions
 - 15% is worth 200 points, 20% is worth 300 points.
 - We could get an additional points 700 if we used heat pumps in a space bigger than 14,999 square feet and used it as a demonstration site.

- The library is a very small space and the highway department office is small.
 - Would they reach the required threshold if we combined the two spaces? (Craig wrote that the combined space is 1,155 sq ft.)
 - Would NYSERDA let us combine the two spaces to count in the square footage? (Craig wrote that NYSERDA will allow us to do this.)
 - **Brenda** and **Craig** will look into this.
- Heat Pump Campaign
 - We previously conducted a Heat Pump campaign and signed up 5 homes and received money for this.
 - Using the same scoping document as before, we can continue our campaign and try to get 10 new residential or commercial heat pumps (but not town owned properties).
 - The installation of the heat pumps (for hot water, part of a home or an entire home) can be from June 1, 2023 to the present
 - worth 600 points
 - How can we find out how many heat pumps have been installed after our initial 5
 - **Becky** will check with Rycor
 - **Marion** will check with Dells
 - **Elyse** will check with Capital District Clean Energy Hub: <https://www.cleanenergycapitalregion.org/>
 - **Brenda** will check with the Canaan Code Enforcement Officer and Columbia County Climate Smart Clean Energy Campaign
- Electric vehicle campaign
 - We must submit a scoping document (like we did for the solar and heat pump campaigns)
 - After scoping document is accepted we must get 5 people in Canaan to buy electric cars.
 - **Elyse**, **Marion**, **Becky** will work on scoping document
- Replace town landscaping equipment with electric
 - The only town equipment in category is our mower
 - **Brenda** will check how old our town mower is and when we will need to replace it.
 - This would be worth 200 points (It would reduce 5 metric tons of CO2 emissions)
- Municipal fleet inventory
 - This would be an update from what Stephen, Christine from Highway Department, Craig and Marion did previously for Bronze Certification.
 - **Marion** and **Craig** will do this again.
 - Worth 200 points
- Other projects that might be worth points

- A Disaster Preparedness training for residents sponsored by the town and the Canaan fire Company is in the process of being scheduled for this spring. **Brenda** is working on this.
 - A conversation for a grant from Trout Unlimited to work on the culverts at the Canaan Town Park and on North Valley Road is underway. The Highway Superintendent / **Brenda** is working on this.
 - Purchase of generators for a warming/cooling center at the Town Hall, and continuance of operations at the Town Hall and Town Garage during emergencies or disasters. The town is moving forward with this project now with ARPA funds. **Brenda** is working on this.
 - Repair Cafe- town insurance has agreed to cover this with acceptable waiver (previously submitted)
- Ideas to promote the foregoing
 - Invite a home solar installer, a community solar representative, a geothermal representative, a heat pump representative and an electric car representative to an educational event to promote energy reduction. **Becky** will work on this.
 - Maybe this could be combined with Community Day tentatively scheduled for June 15th
 - or combined with a Town Tag Sale / **Brenda** has another party interested in organizing a Tag Sale / not to be combined with or conflict with Community Day
 - Marion went to the Kinderhook Town Tag Sale and thought it was great and it brought lots of people!
 - or combined with a Repair Cafe
 - or some combination of the preceding
 - When would be the best time for these events?
 - **Marion** will look into good tag sale dates.
- Points
 - upgrades- 20%- 2-300
 - heat pumps- 600
 - electric vehicles-200
 - mower- 200
 - building demo- 700
- Announcements
 - The next Climate Carnival will be Saturday, September 14, 2024, sponsored by the Columbia County Climate Smart Committee at the Fairgrounds in Chatham
 - Elyse has volunteered to serve on the Climate Carnival Committee.
 - The New Lebanon Conservation Advisory Council is having an information session on the Regenerate NY grant program
 - The next funding round is this spring so we wanted to get this information to as many people as we can
 - The purpose of this grant program is to support the regeneration of forests so they may continue to deliver vital services such as mitigating climate change, protecting air and water quality, and supporting the economy.

- March 16, 2024 at 1PM
- New Lebanon Library, 550 State Route 20, Columbia Pike, New Lebanon, NY 12125
- <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/private-forest-management/regenerate-new-york-grant-program>
- Our presenter will be Tyler Levy, Forester, Division of Lands & Forests, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Tyler will talk more about the program, eligibility, awards, reimbursement, application process, match requirements and answer all of your questions.
- Please reply to Peg Munves, nlcac.munves@gmail.com if interested in attending.

Canaan Town Park Restoration

- \$1300 left from grant because we saved money on excavation (Joel did it)
 - Funders approved using that money for a sign and mulch
 - a design for the sign has been created, the lower estimate was \$977.
 - Mulch from Country Caretakers or other local vendor- about \$300.
 - We need to get these services paid because of the grant cycle and the town is closing out its 2023 budget.
 - Dylan will get an invoice from Country Caretakers for mulch to Brenda by this Friday so she can use 2023 money for this item.
 - Brenda will check with Joel's father about money needed to reimburse Joel for tractor fuel
 - We will need to find money to print sign later
 - \$1700 quote for a metal installed permanent sign
 - Brenda asked if we had considered private donations to purchase the sign; knows someone who might donate toward this project, especially if donation were used as a match for money raised otherwise (maybe at Community Day?)
 - Designated Saturday, May 18 as Garden Cleanup Day with Sunday, May 19 as a rain date
 - Brenda will check the date on the town calendar
 - Put down cardboard and mulch
 - Everyone should begin to collect cardboard for this
 - If we had extra help it would be great to sand and paint the picnic tables and the pavilion
 - Continue with Water Chestnut eradication
 - Brenda meeting this Friday with representatives of the county and other towns to discuss flood mitigation planning underway at the county
 - Could the pond be dredged to prevent more frequent flooding that results from extreme weather?
 - DEC declined to give us a permit previously, but maybe with current flooding they would reconsider.

- **Becky** wants to create a committee to weed the new town gardens
 - Recruit from Community Gardening Day
 - Put something in town newsletter
 - Call people known to enjoy gardening
- There are other Park improvements wanted
 - retrofit one of the tennis courts or add a pickleball court
 - move veterans monument into park
 - Should we look for a planning grant for the park, given the variety of things being done there?
 - Who can look into this??
 - Kinderhook and New Lebanon have put a lot of money into their Park Improvements. Did they have a planning grant?
- Can we include a book signing for Conrad Vispo's new book at one of our events.
 - From the Hudson to the Taconics: An Ecological and Cultural Field Guide to the Habitats of Columbia County, New York (to be released in April 2024), co-authored by researchers from the Program and [Hudsonia Ltd.](#)
 - The Farmscape Ecology Program has a [new webpage](#) dedicated to the upcoming book

Climate Smart Communities

- **Craig**, **Marion** and **Tara** will map out what we might do to get Silver Certification for our next meeting.
 - New Lebanon just applied for Silver. **Craig** will check with Steve Powers about what actions New Lebanon did for their Silver
 - PE 6.2 Smart Growth Policies for Zoning
 - PE 6.18 Tree Inventory
 - PS 9.1 Climate Change Education
 - PE 7.12 Riparian Buffers
 - PE 7.21 Culverts and Dams
 - PE 7.13 Columbia County CARP
 - PE 7.9 Cooling Centers
 - PE7.8 Shade Structures Policy
 - PE 7.7. Heat Emergency Plan
 - PE 7.2, 7.4 Climate Adaptation Plan
 - PE 7 Climate Vulnerability Assessment

Next Meeting, Tuesday, March 19, 7 pm in the Canaan Town Hall

--

Becky Meier
1409 County Route Five

Canaan, NY 12029
518-781-4686- home
518-929-4664- mobile